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Regents Active-Duty Call-Up Policy, Distance Learning Program Can Assist Newly-Mobilized Student Soldiers

BATON ROUGE - Louisiana public college and university students activated for military duty abroad or stateside can rest assured they will be able to pick up where they left off in their education when their tour of active duty is complete. Moreover, many will be able to continue their education electronically while serving actively in the military, even if they are stationed overseas. This should come as good news for those students who serve in Louisiana's 256th Mechanized Infantry Brigade, which was recently placed on active duty alert. The 256th, headquartered in Lafayette, includes units in several cities across the state.

A Board of Regents policy has established guidelines to assist Louisiana's "student-soldiers" in withdrawing from classes and resuming their studies when they return home. The policy addresses a wide spectrum of issues pertinent to the military mobilization and activation of students who serve in the reserves and Louisiana National Guard. Better still, depending on duty responsibilities and computer/internet access, many of those serving actively may be able to take credit courses through Louisiana's Electronic Campus under the Board of Regents "e-SGR" (Electronic Support for Guard and Reserve) program.

"We appreciate the sacrifices of our students who serve in the military," said Commissioner of Higher Education Joseph Savoie. "The Board of Regents and Louisiana's colleges and universities have made arrangements to support those students, both through our policy, formulated to minimize the hardships students incur when their studies are interrupted by their country's call, and through our e-SGR program, which makes it possible for many students to progress in their degree pursuit while serving actively. We want to remind our students that these provisions are in place as they transition from the campus life to active duty."

Board of Regents policy (Section II-8.2) details notification procedures as well as options for the awarding of academic credit, refund guidelines, the handling of textbooks, student housing, TOPS and other scholarships and financial aid for those who must interrupt their studies because of military

service. In addition, the policy outlines re-enrollment procedures.

(More)

Regents Active-Duty Policy

ADD ONE

The active duty policy was originally adopted by the Board of Regents and higher education management boards in 1991. It was revised in 2001 to include the Louisiana Community and Technical College System. Students who are receiving state or federal financial assistance, including TOPS, and are called up for military duty, are urged to contact their college or university financial aid office for additional information.

The Board of Regents e-SGR program is the result of a collaboration with U.S. Department of Defense agencies to make it possible for active-duty students to continue their education via the internet. The e-SGR program can allow currently-enrolled students called to active duty to take the electronically-delivered equivalents of their classes while deployed in overseas operational theaters. The soldier-students may choose from the wide array of classes available through Louisiana's "electronic campus," which includes some 700+ courses and 13 degree programs provided by institutions throughout Louisiana's public college and university system. Deployed students would not see extra fees or other financial requirements. The Southern Regional Education Board, which comprises 16 southern states, recently adopted Louisiana's e-SGR program as a model program for other member states.

For more information on e-SGR or the Regents activation policy, contact the Board of Regents at (225) 342-4253, or log on to the Board of Regents web site: www.regents.state.la.us.